



**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
CONSTRUCTION CODES COORDINATING BOARD**  
*c/o DCRA – 1100 4th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20024*

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**CODE CHANGE PROPOSAL FORM**

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**CODE:** Property Maintenance      **SECTION NO.** 704      **SUBCOMMITTEE AMENDMENT NO** PM-7-2 version 2  
**PROPOSING SUBCOMMITTEE:** PM      **CHAIR:** Fetterman      **PHONE:** 202 625-2525      **E-mail:** fetterman-dc@att.net  
**DATES OF PROPOSAL:** 5-05-2010      **CCCCB PRESENTATION:** 6-17-2010      **CCCCB APPROVAL:**

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CHECK ONE      ☐ *Revise section to read as follows:*      ☒ *Delete section and substitute the following:*  
                         ☐ *Add new section to read as follows:*      ☐ *Delete section without substitution.*

**TYPE ALL TEXT IN 12-POINT TIMES NEW ROMAN FONT**

~~**LINE THROUGH TEXT TO BE DELETED**~~ (highlight text, under Format, click font and check strikethrough)

**UNDERLINE TEXT TO BE ADDED**

Use additional sheets of the form, if necessary.

See next page.

Anticipated impact of code change on cost of construction (CHECK ONE)

☐ *Increase*      ☒ *Decrease*      ☐ *Negligible*      ☐ *Unknown*

*Per 1,000 SF single-family dwelling      to*  
*Per 1,000SF of commercial building      to*

**JUSTIFICATION OF CHANGE:**

Please reference one or more of the criteria required

- ☐ To address a critical life/safety, health, general welfare need.  
☒ To address a specific District of Columbia policy or statute  
☐ For consistency with federal, or with reference to the Metro DC area (MD, VA) codes  
☐ Address a unique character issue in the District of Columbia  
☐ Correction of errors and omissions  
☐ Other (explain)

These code changes strive to maintain smoke alarm requirements for recent construction while harmonizing with the 1978 DC Smoke Detector Act.

[MF1]**SECTION PM-704G FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS**

Delete Section PM-704.2, PM-704.3, and PM-704.4 of the International Property Maintenance Code in their entirety and add new Sections PM-704.2 and PM-704.3 to read as follows:

**704.2 Smoke alarms.** ~~Single or multiple station~~ smoke alarms shall be installed and maintained in Groups R-2, R-3, R-4 and in dwellings not regulated in Group R occupancies, regardless of *occupant* load at all of the following locations:

1. On the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of *bedrooms*. In efficiency units, the smoke alarm shall be installed in the room used for sleeping.

**704.3 Smoke alarms.** In addition to the locations required by Section 704.2, above, smoke alarms shall be installed and maintained in all occupancies listed above for which a building permit was issued for their installation after CONFIRM DATE (December 1, 2003 [MF2]?).

- ~~12.~~ In each room used for sleeping purposes.
- ~~23.~~ In each story within a *dwelling unit*, including *basements* and cellars but not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics. In dwellings or *dwelling units* with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level.

Single- or multiple-station smoke alarms shall be installed in other groups in accordance with the *International Fire Code*.

**704.43 Power source.** In Group R occupancies and in dwellings not regulated as Group R occupancies, single-station smoke alarms shall receive their primary power from the building wiring provided that such wiring is served from a commercial source and shall be equipped with a battery backup. Smoke alarms shall emit a signal when the batteries are low. Wiring shall be permanent and without a disconnecting switch other than as required for overcurrent protection.

**Exception:** Smoke alarms are permitted to be solely battery operated in buildings where no construction is taking place, buildings that are not served from a commercial power source and in existing areas of buildings undergoing alterations or repairs that do not result in the removal of interior wall or ceiling finishes exposing the structure, unless there is an attic, crawl space or *basement* available which could provide access for building wiring without the removal of interior finishes.

**704.54 Interconnection.** Where more than one smoke alarm is required to be installed within an individual *dwelling unit* in Group R-2, R-3, R-4 and in dwellings not regulated as Group R occupancies, the smoke alarms shall be interconnected in such a manner that the activation of one alarm will activate all of the alarms in the individual unit. The alarm shall be clearly audible in all *bedrooms* over background noise levels with all intervening doors closed.



**Exceptions:**

1. Interconnection is not required in buildings which are not undergoing alterations, repairs or construction of any kind.
2. Smoke alarms in existing areas are not required to be interconnected where alterations or repairs do not result in the removal of interior wall or ceiling finishes exposing the structure, unless there is an attic, crawl space or *basement* available which could provide access for interconnection without the removal of interior finishes.